

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 160400Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7012

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7698

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RS

SUBJECT: SPEAKER'S VIEWS ON NDP

1. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CHONG IL-KWON TOLD AMBASSADOR AND DCM NOV 16 THAT HE BELIEVED KIM YONG-SAM HAD MOVED TOO FAST, TOO FAR, AND HAS MADE EXCESSIVE USE OF FORD VISIT IN ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE HIS PUBLIC IMAGE. SPEAKER ESTIMATES THAT ONLY FIVE-SIX INFLUENTIAL NDP FIGURES SUPPORT HARD LINE ACTIONS, SUCH AS NOVEMBER 15 CONFRONTATION WITH GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLYMEN AND POLICE (REFTEL), AND THAT WHEN SHOWDOWN COMES KIM WILL FIND LITTLE REAL SUPPORT WITHIN PARTY FOR HIS EXTREMISM.

2. THE MAJORITY OF NDP MEMBERS, ACCORDING TO CHONG, HAVE BEEN FORCED TO GO ALONG WITH KIM SO FAR OUT OF CONSIDERATION OF THEIR REPUTATIONS AS OPPOSITION ASSEMBLYMEN. HOWEVER, SPEAKER SAID THAT QUOTE FROM TODAY THE NDP WILL BEGIN TO BREAK UP UNQUOTE. CHONG IMPLIED THAT GOVT WOULD NOW INCREASE ITS OWN EFFORTS TO FOSTERING CHRONIC FACTIONALISM WITHIN NDP.

3. CHONG PERSONALLY EXPRESSED IRRITATION AT NDP ATTITUDE, AFTER ASKING SPEAKER TO MEDIATE ON CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE ISSUE, KIM YONG-SAM REJECTED COMPROMISE WORKED OUT WITH NDP
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FLOOR LEADER KIM YONG-IL; CHONG REPORTS THAT NOW NDP HAS AGAIN

ASKED HIS AID IN NEGOTIATING COMPROMISE. CHONG SAID THAT HE WOULD LET THE NDP QUOTE COOL OFF UNQUOTE FOR A FEW DAYS, BUT THAT HE STILL THOUGHT A COMPROMISE POSSIBLE AFTER NOV 20-24 MORATORIUM ON NDP DEMONSTRATIONS. CHONG ALSO SAID THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY MAJOR NDP DEMONSTRATIONS BEFORE FORD VISIT.

COMMENT: CHONG MAY BE UNDERESTIMATING PUBLIC PRESSURES ON NDP TO SUPPORT KIM YONG-SAM IN HARD LINE ACTIONS, BUT HE IS ON THE MARK IN HIS STATEMENT THAT MANY NDP ASSEMBLYMEN FEAR KIM IS MOVING TOO FAST. ROKG HAS HAD SUCCESS IN PAST IN DIVIDING OPPOSITION AMONG ITSELF.
SNEIDER

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